

**MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA
COMMITTEE ON AWARDS FOR INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

**March 20, 2015
10:00 am**

**Ziggurat Building
Auditorium
707 3rd Street
West Sacramento, California 95605**

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings on September 16, 2014, and September 29, 2014
- III. Chair's Report
- IV. Agenda Items
 - Item A: Overview of the 2015-16 Governor's Budget—Information*
 - Item B: Approval of Awardees—Action*
 - Item C: Approval of Award Amounts—Action*
 - Item D: Approval of Instructions for Report on Proposed Uses of Awards—Action*
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Adjournment

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This agenda is posted at <http://www.dof.ca.gov/innovationawards/>.

For additional information or responses to questions, please contact:

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ITEM A: Overview of the 2015-16 Governor's Budget
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For Information Only

Summary:

Staff will provide an overview of the proposal included in the 2015-16 Governor's Budget to fund the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education.

Background:

The 2015-16 Governor's Budget includes \$25 million General Fund on a one-time basis for the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education. Legislation accompanying the budget enumerates the program's goal of ensuring that more students graduate with bachelor's degrees within four years after beginning higher education.

To award the funds that would be appropriated for this program, the Director of Finance would convene the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education and serve as its chair. The committee would include a member of the State Board of Education appointed by the Governor, a member of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges appointed by the Governor, a trustee of the California State University (CSU) appointed by the Governor, a regent of the University of California (UC) appointed by the Governor, an appointee of the Senate Committee on Rules, and an appointee of the Speaker of the Assembly.

Pursuant to provisions of the proposed budget act, the committee would be authorized to award funds directly to California State University campuses only in 2015-16.

ITEM B: Approval of Awardees

For Committee Action

Summary:

Staff recommends that the committee identify specific applications as awardees. The committee may also want to recognize innovation in applications not selected for awards.

Background:

Applications for the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education were submitted by January 9, 2015. The Department of Finance received 58 applications eligible for awards. Of note:

- *Collaboration:* Nineteen applications describe changes initiated by a single campus, and 39 applications describe changes initiated by a group of institutions.
- *Coordinating Institutions:* The application package approved by the committee required an application to be submitted by a UC campus, a CSU campus, or a California community college. Of the applications submitted:
 - Eight were submitted by UC campuses.
 - Twenty-one were submitted by CSU campuses.
 - Twenty-nine were submitted by community colleges.
- *Participating Institutions:* While a single institution was required to submit an application, more than one UC campus, CSU campus, or community college could participate in an application. Private institutions of higher education and K-12 local education agencies—such as school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools—could also participate. Specifically:
 - Sixteen applications identify at least one UC campus as a participant. All 10 UC campuses (including UC San Francisco) are participating in at least one application.
 - Thirty-one applications identify at least one CSU campus as a participant. Of the 23 CSU campuses, 21 campuses are participating in an at least one application.
 - Forty-four applications identify at least one community college as a participant, with 70 different colleges identified in at least one application.
 - Three applications identify a private institution of higher education as a participant, with eight different institutions identified in at least one application.
 - Twenty-seven applications identify a local education agency as a participant, with 83 different local agencies identified in at least one application.

Staff posted each of the applications at <http://www.dof.ca.gov/innovationawards/>. Each application includes an abstract provided by the applicant describing the key changes initiated since January 10, 2014. Appendix 1 includes the abstracts for each of the applications.

Staff developed an evaluation rubric to align with the application package approved by the committee at the September 29, 2014 meeting. Specifically, staff incorporated the following components of the application package into the rubric:

- *Weights:* The application package includes 12 individual items to which applicants provided responses. Each item was included in one of the following sections: context, innovations, sustainability, and evaluation. The committee determined the following weights:
 - For items in the context section, 10 percent.
 - For items in the innovations section, 40 percent.
 - For items in the sustainability section, 35 percent.
 - For items in the evaluation section, 15 percent.

Using the weights approved by the committee for each section, staff determined weights for each of the individual items and incorporated those weights in the rubric.

- *Qualities of Strong Applications:* The application package states, for each item, the qualities of a strong response. Staff incorporated these statements into the rubric, disaggregating the statements based on the separate qualities identified. The rubric asks an evaluator to determine whether an application's narrative for a particular item is clearly consistent with the particular quality of a strong application, partially consistent, or not consistent.

The rubric allows for an application to earn a maximum score of 100. For the committee's reference, the rubric is included as Appendix 2 to this item.

Staff then evaluated each application using this rubric. Each application received a final score in the following sequence:

1. Each application was initially evaluated by two separate readers. Readers were assigned randomly to applications, so that the same two readers did not necessarily read multiple applications. If the difference between the two initial scores was less than 10, these scores were averaged to produce a final score.
2. If the difference between the initial two scores was equal to or greater than 10, the application was read by a third reader. If the difference between the two closest scores of the three was less than 10, the two closest scores were averaged to produce a final score.
3. If the difference between the two closest scores of the three was equal to or greater than 10, the application was read by a fourth reader. The two closest scores were averaged to produce a final score.

Using these final scores, staff organized the applications into the following five groups:

- *Group 1:* Five applications are included in this group. These applications earned final scores between 93 and 97, inclusive.
- *Group 2:* Five applications are included in this group. These applications earned final scores between 88 and 91, inclusive.
- *Group 3:* Four applications are included in this group. These applications earned final scores of 83.

- *Group 4:* Twelve applications are included in this group. These applications earned final scores between 78 and 82, inclusive.
- *Group 5:* Thirty-two applications are included in this group. These applications earned final scores of 75 or less.

Appendix 3 lists the specific applications, as well as the coordinating institutions and participants, included in each of these groups.

Staff Recommendation:

Rationale

Staff recommends that the committee make awards to the 14 applications included in Groups 1, 2, and 3 for the following reasons:

- These 14 applications received the highest scores in the evaluation process.
- The recommendation would make awards to institutions located throughout the state, covering most regions.
- The recommendation would allow the committee to make a substantial number of awards but still provide meaningful award amounts. (The committee will consider award amounts in Item C.)

Appendix 4 provides additional detail about the applications in Groups 1, 2, and 3, including staff comments that provide short assessments of the applications and some specific examples of innovations that may be of particular interest to the committee.

In general, the applications in Groups 1, 2, and 3 included a range of changes to policies, practices, and systems, to achieve the priorities of the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education. These include alignment of K-12 curriculum with college courses; incentives for dual enrollment in high school and college courses; changes to policies and practices governing placement in college courses; stronger supports as students transition into higher education; redesign of college courses; use of technology to expand access to courses; improved advising; development of structures to transition students beyond undergraduate education; implementation of systems to improve institutional planning and resource allocation; and the creation of formal partnerships across institutions and sectors to improve college completion. Nearly all of the applications described several strategies.

Many similar innovations were found across applications. In general, those applications that earned higher scores exhibited greater consistency, clarity, and coherence across all sections. Applicants were asked to describe specific goals that have been established to address the particular challenges of the students being served, innovations linked to those goals, and evidence of sustained leadership and a shared vision among participants in the application.

Staff will work to support dissemination of the many creative strategies being implemented by applicants.

Resolution

RESOLVED, by the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education:

1. The committee identifies the applications included in Groups 1, 2, and 3, as specified in Appendix 3, as awardees.

2. The committee recognizes the innovation of the applications included in Group 4, as specified in Appendix 3.
3. The committee takes no further action on the applications included in Group 5, as specified in Appendix 3.

[The committee may choose to consider parts of this staff recommendation separately, with discussion sequentially on the individual parts.]

ITEM C: Approval of Award Amounts

For Committee Action

Summary:

Staff recommends that the committee approve the amount of funds included in awards presented to the awardees identified by the committee pursuant to action on Item B.

Background:

The Budget Act of 2014 appropriates \$50 million for the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education. Within that funding level, the statute establishing the program provides the committee with discretion in determining (1) the total amount of funds to be used and (2) the amounts to be included in each award. The application package approved by the committee at the September 29, 2014 meeting indicates that staff intends to recommend that each award include at least \$2.5 million.

In Item B, staff recommends identifying 14 applications as awardees. If the committee were to divide \$50 million equally between 14 recommended awardees, each awardee would receive \$3,571,000. Alternatively, if each of those 14 awardees were to receive \$2.5 million, representing the minimum award the application package indicated staff would recommend to the committee, the total amount of funds encumbered would be \$35 million.

While this item requests that the committee approve the amount of funds included in the awards, awardees would not have access to these funds immediately. As described in Item D, the committee is required to approve the proposed uses of an award before the Director of Finance releases funds to the coordinating institution of an application selected for an award.

Staff Recommendation:

RESOLVED, by the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education:

1. The committee awards a total of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) to the awardees identified by the committee at this meeting, with each awardee receiving an equal amount of funds.

ITEM D: Approval of Instructions for Report on Proposed Uses of Awards

For Committee Action

Summary:

Staff recommends that the committee approve instructions for the reports that will be submitted by awardees on their proposed uses of their awards. These instructions would be issued by the Director of Finance.

Background:

The committee is required to approve the proposed uses of an award before the Director of Finance releases funds to the coordinating institution. As articulated in the application package approved by the committee on September 29, 2014, the committee's expectation is that funds will be used for appropriate, one-time purposes that are related to the priorities of the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education program. While an award is a one-time allocation from the state, if an awardee proposes, funds could be spent over multiple years.

Staff prepared a draft set of instructions for awardees, which is included as Appendix 1 to this item. Awardees are required to submit this report to the Director of Finance no later than April 10, 2015. Staff's intent is to present reports received by the awardees on their proposed uses of funds to the committee for consideration at the meeting on April 27, 2015.

Staff Recommendation:

RESOLVED, by the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education:

1. The committee approves the instructions for the report on proposed uses of awards included as Appendix 1 to this item, to be distributed by the Director of Finance to awardees.
2. This committee authorizes staff to take any necessary actions or make technical edits, or both, to these instructions, consistent with the committee's direction and intent.